60p

THE Unexplained

MYSTERIES OF MIND SPACE & TIME

119

1914: all quiet?
Helen Duncan, martyr?
Squatters in the mind
Suspended animation
Waking up to psi

Aus & NZ$1.75 SAR1.75 IR75p US$1.50

THE Unexplained
MYSTERIES OF MIND SPACE & TIME

Published weekly by Orbis Publishing Limited
Orbis House, 20/22 Bedfordbury, London WC2N 4BT

Volume 10 Issue 119

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Contents

No-war prophecies
NONE SO BLIND . . . 2361
According to the seers and psychics nothing much would happen in 1914: what went wrong?
Kevin McClure

Live burials
A GRAVE CONDITION 2366
Strange practices associated with live burials are investigated – including 'self-mummification'
Bob Rickard

Multiple personalities
SQUATTERS IN THE MIND 2370
How many personalities can inhabit one body – and what happens if they fight for possession of it?
Archie Roy

Helen Duncan
A SPIRITED DEFENCE 2374
Imprisoned for fraud, medium Helen Duncan is revered as a martyr by some. But was she innocent or guilty?
Roy Stemman

Extra-sensory perception
WAKING UP TO PSI 2378
Once established, a dream dialogue can reveal distinct psychic components, as one 'dream partnership' found
Joe Friedman

Picture acknowledgements
Cover: Photri; Klaus Aarsleff (inset); **2361:** Robert Hunt Library; **2362:** Psychic News (tl and b); John Frost (tr); **2363:** Robert Hunt Library; **2364:** Swiss National Tourist Office (t); Mary Evans Picture Library (b); **2365:** Mary Evans Picture Library (c); John Cutten (b); **2366:** John Hillelson Agency/Sygma (t); Colorific!/Elda Hartley (c); Henry Gris (b); **2367:** Klaus Aarsleff (t); Topham (c); **2368:** Edward Rice (t); Mary Evans Picture Library (b); **2369:** Fate Magazine (c); Carmen Blacker (b); **2370:** Bridgeman Art Library; **2370–2371:** Joel Finler; **2371:** UPI, New York; **2372:** Joel Finler (t); National Portrait Gallery, London (b); **2373:** UPI, New York; **2374:** Mary Evans Picture Library/Harry Price Collection (t); Psychic News (b); **2375:** Harry Price Library (t and c); Popperfoto (b); **2376:** Psychic News; **2377:** Harry Price Library (t); Psychic News (c); **2378:** UPI, New York; **2379:** Linda Jones (t); Joseph Friedman (cr); **2380:** Joseph Friedman; **back cover:** Science Photo Library

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In next week's issue

The 'malevolent forces' that allegedly drove the Lutz family from their dream home in **Amityville**, USA, have made worldwide headlines, and have proved to be money-spinning material – but our investigations reveal another side to the story. For centuries the **Horse whisperers** have had mysterious, total control over their animals – known as using The Word; how do they do it? In **Comets and catastrophes** we search the myths of the ancient world for evidence of cometary influence, with intriguing results; while **Multiple personalities** debates the nature of a psychic's true 'self'. We also discuss the life and work of arguably the greatest medium of all time, **D.D. Home**, whose strange gifts included bodily elongation and incombustibility.

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Subscription Rates
For six months (26 issues) £17.60, for one year (52 issues) £35.20. Send your order and remittance to The Unexplained Subscriptions, Punch Subscription Services, Watling Street, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK2 2BW, being sure to state the number of the first issue required.
Back numbers
U.K. & Eire: Back Nos are obtainable at cover price from your newsagent or from The Unexplained Back Nos. Orbis Publishing Ltd, 20/22 Bedfordbury, London WC2N 4BT – post free.
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Malta: Binders are obtainable by ordering from your local newsagent price £3.25. In case of difficulty write to The Unexplained Binders, Miller (Malta) Ltd, PO Box 272, 18a Scots Street, Valletta.

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None so blind...

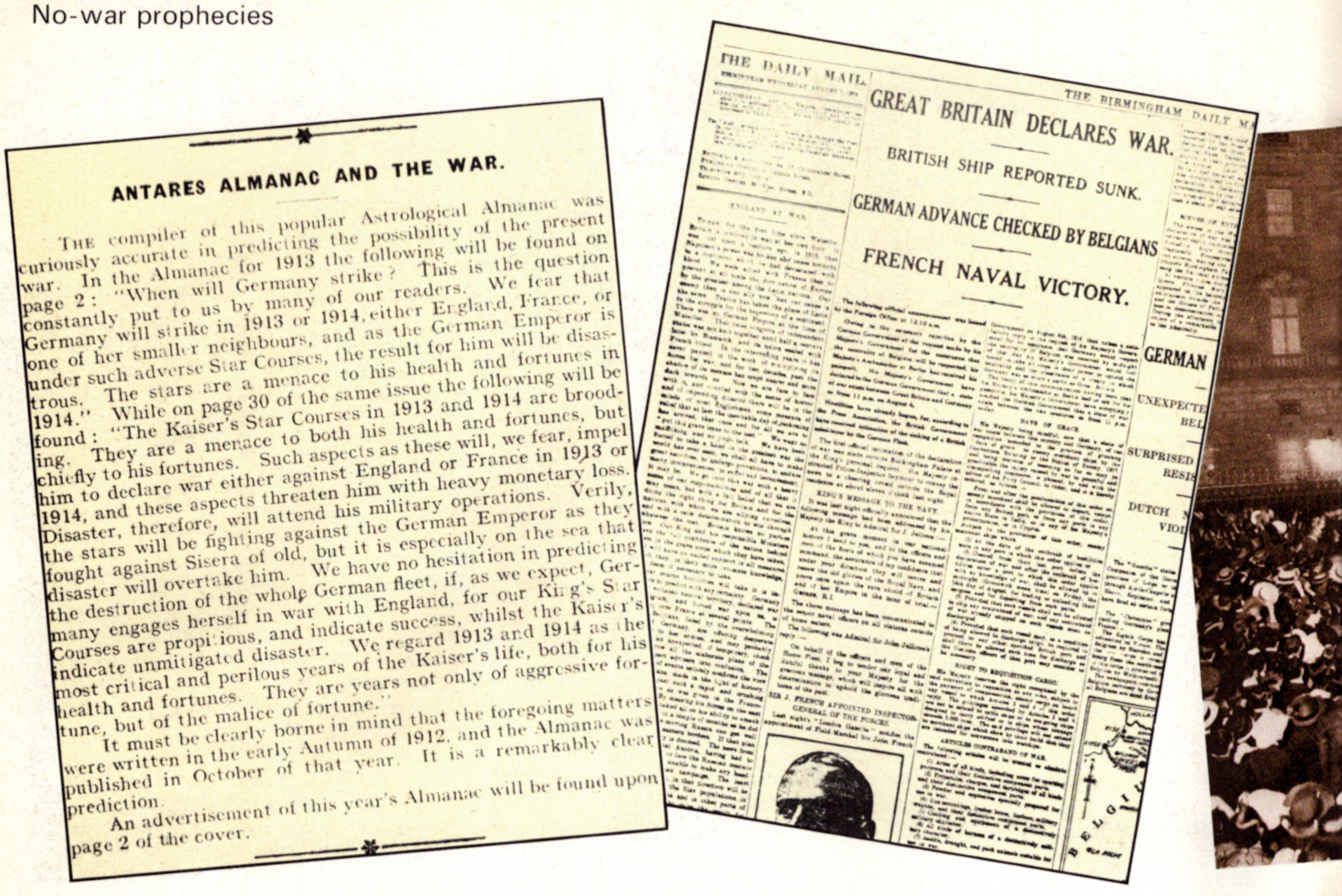
The First World War was one of the great catastrophes of all time – yet it failed to catch the attention of the world's seers and prophets. Why, asks KEVIN McCLURE, was there no precognition of this devastating event?

THE HISTORY OF PROPHECY is one of almost consistent failure when judged on the basis of how few successful predictions are on record. Yet the successful ones are usually the only ones remembered. The many famous Bible prophecies are still to be fulfilled in their two most important aspects: the coming of the Messiah and the second coming of the Messiah. Since the first century – and with depressing frequency – some Christians have awaited the fulfilment of prophecies about the end of the world. With the approach of the year 2000, a rash of violent and fearsome predictions of doom has appeared. These in all probability will turn out to be as inaccurate as those of preceding generations.

This failure of prophecy is the more peculiar because of the strong evidence supporting the success of *premonitions* about forthcoming events. Among the records of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR), which celebrated its centenary in 1982, there are three particular disasters in which foreknowledge by individuals is well documented: the sinking of the SS *Titanic* in 1912, the Aberfan landslip in 1966 and the collapse of the Teton Dam in Idaho, USA, in 1976. In all these cases there is good evidence that individuals – a fair number in each instance – experienced some sort of emotional reaction to these tragedies before they had taken place. But these people did not make predictions. They could not say what would happen or when or why, and in most instances what they experienced made no sense to them until after the event. But many of those who gave detailed accounts of what they had foreseen to reliable friends or relatives proved correct.

Perhaps this provides a way to distinguish between prophecy and premonition: while premonition is an involuntary, emotional

Almost an entire generation of young men were killed or mutilated and large areas of Europe were laid waste in the four years between 1914 and 1918. The world will never be the same – yet not a single prophet foresaw this enormous tragedy



ANTARES ALMANAC AND THE WAR.

THE compiler of this popular Astrological Almanac was curiously accurate in predicting the possibility of the present war. In the Almanac for 1913 the following will be found on page 2: "When will Germany strike? This is the question constantly put to us by many of our readers. We fear that Germany will strike in 1913 or 1914, either England, France, or one of her smaller neighbours, and as the German Emperor is under such adverse Star Courses, the result for him will be disastrous. The stars are a menace to his health and fortunes in 1914." While on page 30 of the same issue the following will be found: "The Kaiser's Star Courses in 1913 and 1914 are brooding. They are a menace to both his health and fortunes, but chiefly to his fortunes. Such aspects as these will, we fear, impel him to declare war either against England or France in 1913 or 1914, and these aspects threaten him with heavy monetary loss. Disaster, therefore, will attend his military operations. Verily, the stars will be fighting against the German Emperor as they fought against Sisera of old, but it is especially on the sea that disaster will overtake him. We have no hesitation in predicting the destruction of the whole German fleet, if, as we expect, Germany engages herself in war with England, for our King's Star Courses are propitious, and indicate success, whilst the Kaiser's indicate unmitigated disaster. We regard 1913 and 1914 as the most critical and perilous years of the Kaiser's life, both for his health and fortunes. They are years not only of aggressive fortune, but of the malice of fortune."

It must be clearly borne in mind that the foregoing matters were written in the early Autumn of 1912, and the Almanac was published in October of that year. It is a remarkably clear prediction.

An advertisement of this year's Almanac will be found upon page 2 of the cover.

THE DAILY MAIL

THE BIRMINGHAM DAILY MAIL

GREAT BRITAIN DECLARES WAR.

BRITISH SHIP REPORTED SUNK.

GERMAN ADVANCE CHECKED BY BELGIANS

FRENCH NAVAL VICTORY.

reaction, prophecy is more an intellectual act, a conscious attempt to look into the future and foretell what will happen. In view of the vagaries and unreasonableness of much of human behaviour, it is not surprising that prophets are so rarely correct. Even in the case of the celebrated Nostradamus, very few of his prophecies, written as quatrains, have been accurately interpreted before the events they are said to foretell have come to pass. Was he a real prophet, able by magical or astrological techniques to tap some source of knowledge of an unavoidable, pre-ordained future? Or did he really just experience remarkably vivid premonitions about the distant future, which he fleshed out with verbal detail like any ordinary clairvoyant? Might not the graphic but dream-like nature of premonitory experience account for the obscurity, even the confusion, of the quatrains? This seems as likely a reason as the need for secrecy or the fear of persecution, which is the usual explanation.

Whatever may have been the source of the prophecies of Nostradamus – or of any other 'prophetic' material – the belief persists that there have been successful prophets in the past, and that there are prophecies relating to the present and the near future that must be taken seriously. Even if we set aside the major philosophical problems that such a belief raises – such as predestination and the nature of choice – other difficulties arise.

Below: J.J. Morse, editor of the Spiritualist newspaper *Two Worlds* at the time of the First World War. Although communications from the spirit world about matters of state were often published, there was no advance information from the 'other side' about the 1914–1918 conflict

Where could information about the future come from? If it is right, why do only certain people know what is going to happen? If the information is wrong, are the would-be prophets merely making up their pronouncements? Or is their source – as some people believe – some external intelligence, which either does not know and fabricates information, or tells lies?

Most people would agree that the two major events of this century have been the First and Second World Wars of which the most memorable events are the Holocaust, which caused the death of millions of Jews, and the dropping of nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The record of prophecies about these monumental and far-reaching historical events is very disappointing. Yet it would seem that, if prophecy had any validity, these earth-shattering occurrences would have been a natural subject for prophets.

Nostradamus is arguably the most famous prophet, but there is no instance of a successful interpretation of his predictions during the period 1914 to 1918, while the war was actually going on. Indeed, even the two most modern commentators, Erika Cheetham and Geoffrey Houghton-Brown, working with all the benefits of hindsight, have only been able to dredge up three apparently relevant quatrains. These are Century 2, Quatrain 2, and Century 6, Quatrains 30 and 43. But

Above: war headlines, a crowd outside Buckingham Palace to hear an official announcement, soldiers in the mud and mire of the trenches – such news and pictures predominated in England and the world for four tragic years. Seers seemed to be unaware of the coming of the war, but *Two Worlds* (far left) managed to find a prediction about the war for the issue of 28 August 1914 – over three weeks after it broke out

even then, there is no *obvious* reference to the First World War in any of the three, and the two experts do not agree on which verses might relate to the war. Considering that it was one of the greatest tragedies in history to date, and that it drastically affected France, the seer's own homeland and the focal point of many of his prophecies, Nostradamus seems to have drawn a blank in his quest for information about the future. In this light his prophecies about the Antichrist and the end of the world are less credible.

Unknowing spirits

The Spiritualists, who dealt with important questions of the day, were caught unawares by the First World War. Looking through copies of the most popular of the weekly Spiritualist newspapers in 1914, *Two Worlds*, the overwhelming sensation in the weeks following the outbreak of war in August is one of surprise. There was no prior warning – not even a clear hint. Surely, if the 'other side' has so much wisdom, such awareness of our present and our future, the communicators from beyond would have known about the war. Yet the best that J.J. Morse, the *Two Worlds* editor, came up with was an exhortation to take 'five minutes for silent aspiration to the Higher Powers to exert their force towards the termination of the fearful murder being committed in the name of war', and a fine editorial that anticipated, with some perception but no apparent inside information, the horrors of the coming four years.

But it was not long before examples of prophecy appeared in print – although none had been published as definite statements before the war started. *Two Worlds* and many other journals soon began to 'discover' such predictions and to publish them retrospectively within a few weeks of the war's outbreak. And if one individual were to be singled out for promulgating and publicising them in Britain, then it must be Ralph Shirley, editor of the popular monthly magazine, the *Occult Review*.

The war had commenced at the beginning of August after only a few weeks of certainty that it would break out. To judge from the dating of the introduction to his first work about wartime prophecies, Ralph Shirley finished his booklet *Prophecies and omens of the Great War*, on 15 October of the same year, and it would seem to have found a ready market. By 13 November it was being advertised in *Two Worlds* in the following terms:

> The collection of prophecies is not a numerous one. What is known as the Mayence (or Strasburg) prophecy, made about the year 1854, is quoted at considerable length. It certainly was a remarkable one. Among the omens there is given that of a small lake near

Rowers in peaceful competition on the Rotsee near Lucerne in Switzerland. The name 'Rotsee', meaning Red Lake, indicates that it may be the mythical 'Lake of Blood', which is said to be near Lucerne. This lake is alleged to turn blood red when a great war is coming – but there is no record that it did so before the First World War

> Lucerne, called 'the Lake of Blood', the waters of which are said to turn blood red when a great war is approaching. In the chapter dealing with astrological prophecies, that of 'Antares' is quoted, as well as some of Zadkiel's. The booklet is timely and topical, and sure to interest. The price is 6d, or 7d post free.

Inspection of the slim volume certainly confirms that 'the collection of prophecies is not a numerous one'. And, for an author who commences a book with the lines: ''Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore/And coming events cast their shadows before', he hardly proves that even the most dramatic of coming events do anything of the sort. The paragraph concerning the mystic lake runs, in its entirety, as follows:

> There is a certain small lake near Lucerne called the Lake of Blood. Among Swiss superstitions is one which maintains that when a great war is approaching, the waters of the lake turn blood red; hence the name of the lake. The waters of the lake turned red a short time before the Franco-German War in 1870, and again, after an interval of 42 years, before the recent war in the Balkans.

On such 'evidence' we are left to wonder what, if anything, happened in 1914.

Elsewhere in the same short book – which, however, seems to have been big enough to collect together most of the then current prophecies – Shirley goes on to introduce Count Leo Tolstoy, the renowned Russian writer. Shirley says that Tolstoy's forecast is among 'the most noteworthy prophecies of the present war'. Some of the more specific parts of it, as published in 1936 in *The story of prophecy* by Henry James Foreman, are given here.

Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910), one of Russia's greatest writers, wrote about a vision of war that would see 'all Europe in Flames and bleeding'. But the only detail he got even remotely right was the date, which he put at 1912

> The great conflagration will start about 1912, set by the torch of the first arm [the arm belonging to a symbolic 'nude woman – floating upon the sea', introduced earlier] in the countries of South-Eastern Europe. It will develop into a destructive calamity in 1913. In that year I see all Europe in Flames and bleeding. I hear the lamentations on huge battlefields.
>
> But about the year 1915 a strange figure from the North – a new Napoleon – enters the stage of the bloody drama. He is a man of little militaristic training, a writer or journalist, but in his grasp most of Europe will remain until 1925. The end of the great calamity will mark a new political era for the Old World. There will be left *no countries*, but empires or kingdoms. The world will form a Federation of the United States of Nations. There will remain only four great giants – the Anglo-Saxons, the Latins, the Slavs and the Mongolians.

This section of Tolstoy's prophecy conveys the key points. If we try to score 'hits' against 'misses', it must be said that at the time the prophecy was apparently made, in the autumn of 1910, Tolstoy appears to have had some possibly premonitory knowledge of what was to happen. Certainly the date, 1913, is close to the date of the war. The references to south-east Europe could be seen as referring to the upheaval in the Balkans. However, the remainder is utterly wrong. It seems that we have to regard Tolstoy as an ordinary man who experienced the usual vague premonitions, perhaps

persuaded by his fame to go a little far in his pronouncements – which were then widely publicised.

Also in *The story of prophecy* is recorded a remarkable prophecy about the date of the start and end of the war, derived and interpreted from measurement of the dimensions of the passages of the Great Pyramid:

> The Great Step at this point, a block of stone, is taken as symbolic of the consummation of the age, and the interpretation of the knowledge contained in the Pyramid. We have arrived at the Great War period.
>
> Now follows the First Low Passage, measured from August 4th–5th 1914, to 11th November 1918, a little over four years, coinciding with the duration of the Great War, to the Armistice.

Remarkable accuracy indeed – if only the 'prophecy' had been interpreted or published prior to the Armistice it refers to, rather than several years after.

Other supposedly successful prophecies came thick and fast in the first 18 months of the war. After that, they died out. But while they were still appearing, and as they were 'discovered', the *Occult Review* and *Two Worlds* did much to publicise them.

Below: the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of Serbia was the spark that ignited the conflagration of 1914

Bottom: F.C.S. Schiller, philosopher and member of the Society for Psychical Research, wrote scathingly about the failure of clairvoyants to foresee the First World War

Shirley spread the good news of a French clairvoyant, Mme de Thebes, who published an annual almanac of predictions. With regard to the predictions for 1913, he credits her with foreknowledge of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, though on what grounds it is hard to determine. He says that 'the Parisian Seeress seems to have anticipated that the struggle would begin a year before it actually took place.' The English philosopher F.C.S. Schiller, writing in the June 1916 issue of the *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research, acidly commented,

> Both in the 1911 and 1912 issues she predicted the outbreak of the Great War in 1913. In the 1912 issue she predicts also an earthquake and a scarcity of milk in France, and a possible collapse of monarchy in England, and revolutions in Japan. . . . The issue for 1915 predicts an end to the war by June 1915, a revolution in Germany, and the Kaiser's disappearance.

The spectres of a wide variety of spurious medieval and later prophecies were raised, sold to the public, and made much of, before being firmly extinguished by such eminent sceptics as Schiller and the leading Catholic scholar, Father Herbert Thurston. Father Thurston wrote his critical book *The war and the prophets* in 1915. This dealt with almost all the supposed predictions of the war, and demolished them all. Among these pieces of nonsense were the prophecies of 'Brother Johannes', of 'Arminius, Prior of the Monastery of Lehnin', of Prince William of Prussia and the gipsy at Mainz, and of the 'Battle of the Birch-Tree' (called the 'Prophecy of Mayence' after an imaginary monastery). All of them are exceedingly obscure.

Misery and suffering

Much as one might wish, it is impossible to cite a single, accurate, cast-iron prophecy made before the Great War – and fulfilled by it. But though there are some hints of presentiment – not surprisingly, considering the perilous state of many European nations, and the increasingly aggressive stance of Germany – there does not seem to have been one clear prediction even that the war would begin in 1914, or end in 1918. In the early months of the war, 1915 was foreseen as the date of its resolution.

Perhaps it is against human nature to prophecy such suffering as eventually occurred. This is partly the view of Schiller in remarking on the misery that must have afflicted the compilers of *Old Moore's Almanack*, the only collection of predictions still being published:

> That this worthy's *Almanack* for 1914 should have failed to read the doom of European civilisation in the stars may be excused perhaps by human frailty and the feebleness of man's vision; but one would have expected him to make ample amends at any rate in 1915, and to give quite as authentic an account of it as the leading newspapers. To our astonishment, however, we find nothing at all that can be interpreted as a recognition by the astral powers of the troubles of the terrestrial. . . . It is rumoured that the explanation is simple. Old Moore's 'genuine Foulsham edition' for 1915 had gone to press *before* the end of July 1914.

Such are the problems of being a prophet in an age of mass communication.

The spirits turned out to be poor prophets about the Second World War – see page 2406

A grave condition

In Dahomey, West Africa, certain tribesmen are drugged, wound in a sheet (left) and buried for long periods. During this time they are supposed to be in touch with magical or archetypal forces that will benefit the whole tribe. Some Indian yogis, who go through similar ordeals, have been tested by Western scientists, such as Dr Elmer Green of the Menninger Foundation (below), and discovered to be 'elsewhere' mentally, and possibly aware of events outside time and space. The Russian mentalist Wolf Messing (bottom) apparently gained his bizarre gifts only after a prolonged, 'psychic' sleep, or trance

How can a man – even a trained adept, such as an Indian yogi – suspend his bodily functions in such a way that he is, in effect, simulating death? BOB RICKARD looks at the curious phenomenon of prolonged suspended animation that is still practised today

IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE to Westerners that men can deliberately put themselves in a state of suspended animation – by controlling their autonomic bodily functions, in a way not understood – and remain buried underground for hours, days, or – so it is rumoured – even years and emerge alive. Yet for centuries reliable witnesses have reported many such 'impossible' feats performed by Indian fakirs or yogis – but why do they choose such an extreme form of self-mortification?

The yogi has developed these disciplines to minimise inner and outer distractions (the latter by controlling his sensory channels) in his quest for the attainment of higher consciousness. But it appears that the Indian fakir uses them simply to control his body rather than to reach some nebulous *samadhi*, or ecstasy. To him the live burial becomes the supreme demonstration of his power over his body and mind. According to Andrija Puharich, the fakir is not unconscious in the ordinary sense, since one of his aims is to maintain full control of the four states – waking, sleeping, dreaming and the biological shutdown of the 'false death' of catalepsy, which in the fakir's case is often self-induced. During the period of burial he does not lose consciousness but enters a deep state of meditation.

Just how and why the practice first originated is lost in the mists of time. The physician James Braid, at least, was sure of its antiquity. In his *Observations of trance, of human hibernation* (1850), he cites a passage from the *Dabistan*, a Persian classic on Indian religion: 'It is an established custom amongst the yogis that, when malady overtakes them, they bury themselves.' This implies that self-inhumation may have its

origin in attitudes towards death and illness, the technique being learned from the survivors who undoubtedly reported that the extreme form of isolation hastened their cure or enhanced their ecstasies. Comparisons might be drawn here with the therapeutic sleep of patients at the temple-hospitals dedicated to the god Asclepius in 5th-century Greece – such as the one that flourished at Epidaurus (see page 1852) – and the practice, common in oriental mystery cults, of keeping an initiate in darkness or underground for a period of instruction, or in a trance-like sleep, induced by drugs or exhaustion, in order to obtain visions.

A different origin might have been the imitation of spontaneous instances of suspended animation – indeed the medical historians G. Gould and W. Pyle, in their *Anomalies and curiosities of medicine* (1896), compare the fakir's feat to cases of recovery from hanging or drowning involving either long periods of unconsciousness or the pathological form of catalepsy that has frequently led to the horrors of premature burial. This latter form, also called narcolepsy, contributed to the growth of the vampire legend (see page 1079). To this we might add the hysterical catalepsy that preceded the arrival of paranormal abilities in a significant number of cases, such as the Russian telepathist Wolf Messing (see page 1237) who was unconscious for three days.

Gould and Pyle discuss other cases in the literature of abnormal psychology from the 19th century either in connection with diseases or as 'spontaneous mesmeric sleep'.

The ability to simulate death is rare – though not unknown – in the West. St Augustine, for example, writing in the 6th century, described the ability of a priest named Rutilut, who could deliberately stop his pulse and respiration and who was insensitive to pain during his self-induced trances.

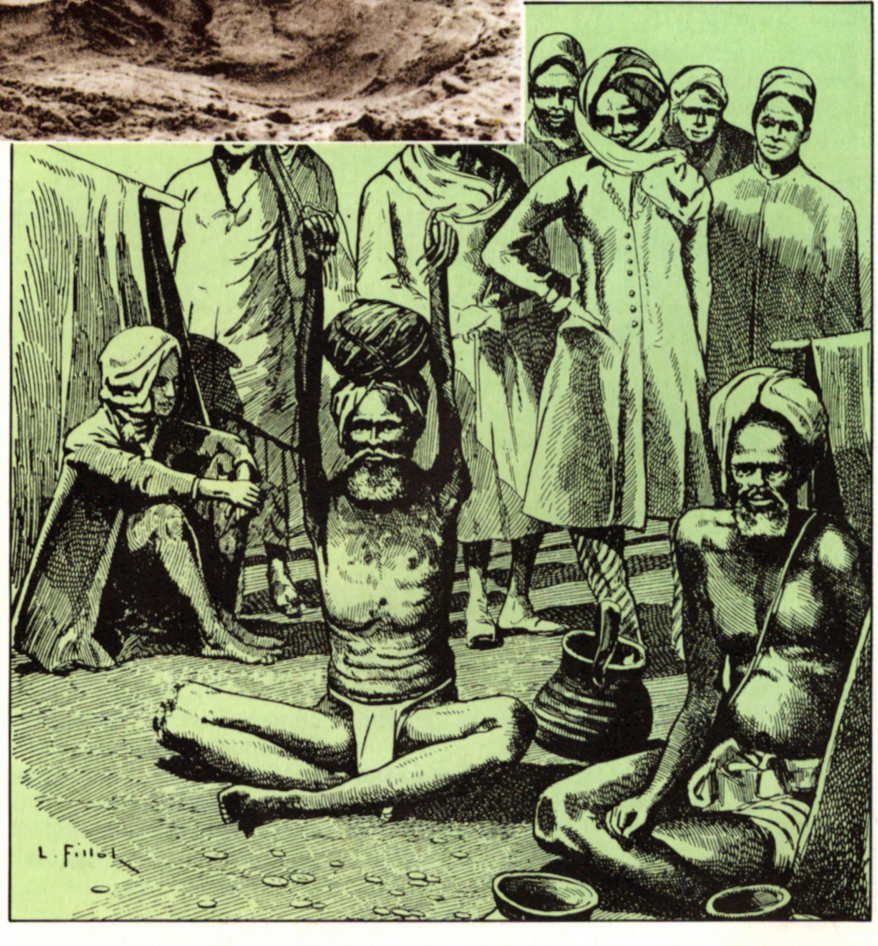
Whatever the origins of live burial, instances similar to those of India do occur in other countries where they are part of the physical phenomena of ritualised trance – as described in M. Eliade's *Shamanism* (1972). In *More things* (1969) Ivan Sanderson tells of a burial of an unnamed fakir for 24 hours under two truckloads of gooey earth on the main plaza of Belize, British Honduras, supervised by five doctors, including a British Senior Medical Officer.

And in Japan there existed a strange cult of self-mummification, described in Carmen Blacker's *The Catalpa bow* (1975). These Buddhists would vow to complete fasts lasting up to 4000 days, beginning with a severely restricted diet and gradually diminishing to a total fast with the goal of dying on the last day of the fast. At least two members of this 'interesting and now extinct' group are recorded as entering their tombs alive. Provided only with a breathing tube, they too eventually joined the ranks of mummified abbots in the temples on Mount Yudono.

Top: in 1974 an Indian yogi buried his head in earth for many long minutes, with a pulse rate of just two beats per minute – but he survived. And a US stuntman, Bill White (above), attracted attention by staying underground for 134 days, two hours and five minutes in 1978, passing the time by telephoning the press – including the public relations officer of *The Guinness book of records* (in which he found a place)

According to the South African *Pretoria News* in late 1974, a Togolese jujuman, named Togbui Siza Aziza, was buried for three hours in Accra in an ordinary coffin. Stone slabs covered the box, then a layer of mortar topped with more slabs. After two hours the crowd began to panic and pleaded with Aziza, whose muffled voice could still be faintly heard. Finally, the ground shook and Aziza burst through the mortar, easily shoving the slabs aside. But the coffin was found nailed shut. Interestingly, Aziza, who tours with a group promoting African mysticism, Afrika Azzeu, says that he gains his magical

The legendary feats of Indian holy men include being buried with arms protruding from the ground (left), and keeping one's arms above one's head for 30 years (below). It seems likely that many such tales are mere rumour, but some of them may well be based on fact



powers, which include the ability to heal the sick, understand animals and be impervious to pain, by meditating underground.

Among other accounts of suspended animation from Africa, mention must be made of the 'walkers for water', who were first drawn to the attention of Ivan Sanderson in 1932 by the British Resident Mr N. H. Cleverley in Calabar, British Cameroons. The Resident had dispatched a senior official and a sergeant of the Native Bush Police to investigate the refusal of several villages in the Ibibio tribal territory to pay their taxes. The villagers were nowhere to be found on their large swamp-surrounded islands, until the native sergeant doffed his uniform and went 'under cover'. Then he made a startling discovery.

Peering over a 6-foot (1.6-metre) cliff the sergeant saw 'the entire community (over a hundred souls, men, women and children, *and* their pets, which were confined in open-work baskets and appeared to be asleep) sitting motionless at the bottom of the water with their backs to the bank.' The sight of his sergeant shaking with fear – and failing to 'wake up' the villagers, in 8 feet (2.4 metres)

Death when is thy sting?

Stephen Pile's bestselling *Book of heroic failures* (1979) includes 'The most unsuccessful lying in state' and 'The funeral that disturbed the corpse'. The first concerns the 'late' Bishop of Lesbos who, in 1896, after two days lying in state, suddenly sat up and demanded to know what the mourners were staring at. In the second story a missionary called Schwartz who 'died' in New Delhi in the 1890s joined in the hymn singing from his coffin during his funeral.

In the context of Pile's book both are hilarious stories, yet premature burial was – and still is – a grim business. In the days when doctors merely felt the pulse or held a mirror to catch the mist of breath, cataleptic patients had a horrifyingly high chance of being certified dead and duly buried – alive. In primitive areas knocking sounds emitting from freshly dug graves might be taken as ghostly manifestations and therefore ignored.

But, despite today's medical sophistication, the actual moment of death is the subject of hot debate; are we 'dead' if our hearts stop beating or only when our brains cease to register electrical activity? And is the heart that is transplanted an organ that is torn from the living or from the dead?

of water, was too much for the European, who fled back to Calabar. His report was not dismissed by his superiors, who were 'old Coasters' and well acquainted with the bizarre practices of the region. A second, more experienced team was dispatched, but by the time they arrived village life was back to normal and the sergeant had collected the taxes. This was not 'a yarn', Cleverley assured Sanderson; the incident had been soberly recorded at the Resident's court in Calabar.

This story is not unrelated to the live burial of fakirs. Either the African villagers could suspend their vital functions spontaneously, or they prevailed upon some shaman skilled in techniques akin to hypnotism. But there is a record of at least one yogi who performed a very similar phenomenon by an act of his own will in Bombay, on 15 February 1950, according to a report in the *Lancet* for that year signed by a Dr R. J. Vakil. Before a huge crowd, and under Dr Vakil's supervision, 'an emaciated middle-aged sadhu called Shri Ramdasji' was sealed into a small underground cubicle for 56 hours. The chamber measured 5 by 8 feet (1.5 by 2.4 metres) and was made of concrete studded with large nails, and plugged with more concrete. At the end of the 56 hours a hole was bored in the lid and 1400 gallons (6400 litres) of water poured in through a firehose, and the hole re-sealed. The watery tomb was broken open nearly seven hours later and the sadhu discovered completely submerged. He had survived.

For 15 years after hearing the story of the Ibibio villagers from Cleverley, Sanderson tried to find out more about their astonishing feat, but in vain. 'Trouble is,' he wrote, 'I can't find anybody in our world who will even discuss the matter sensibly and from a scientific point of view. One would have thought that this would be a golden opportunity for liars and other storytellers. Perhaps it is too big a lie; perhaps they just don't have the imagination. Perhaps, however, it is the truth. . . .'

Above: December 1953, and yogi Count Ostoja induces a trance in order to endure being buried alive; he duly survived. Even stranger desires caused a now extinct cult of Japanese Buddhists to fast unto death – but release came only when they took up a position in what was to be their tomb (left). Some even timed this feat so exactly as to die the same day they entered the tomb

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Squatters in the mind

Some individuals seem to possess a host of different selves who come and go continually. Sometimes a new self is a temporary visitor – sometimes it claims to be the sole true personality. ARCHIE ROY describes these cases of fluid and uncertain identity

THE HISTORY OF MAN'S ADVANCE since the medieval period has been the story of his gradual realisation of how little he seems to matter in the scheme of things. From the pre-Copernican view that he lived at the centre of the Universe, a Universe that was not very much larger than the Earth, he has been forced by modern astronomical discoveries to accept that the Earth is an insignificant dot in the Galaxy, and the Galaxy, in relation to the visible Universe, is the size of a speck of dust in a cathedral. His fond conceit that he was Lord of Creation over the beasts of the field has been swept away by Darwin and his successors; to many he seems to be simply an animal species that grew a large brain and is now in serious danger of following the dinosaur and the dodo to extinction. And in the 19th century his assumption that he was at least in charge of his mind, overseeing its workings and guiding it according to rational purposes, was undermined and demolished by Freud's theories of the subconscious mind. He discovered that large tracts of Man's thinking processes lay behind a barrier; often decisions were taken there and then surfaced, so that he was fooled into accepting them as his own. In implementing them he was cast more in the role of public relations officer than that of managing director.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding these withdrawals to more modest estimates of his position, the average man could still console himself with the belief that at any rate his mental processes, conscious and unconscious, originated within his skull, woven on the marvellous electrochemical loom of his brain. The raw materials feeding the brain came through his five senses and the nerves monitoring his body.

The spiritual factor

This view is held by a large proportion even of those who still pay lip service to the religious teachings that there is a non-material factor – the spiritual – capable of influencing and being contacted by human beings. They believe that their thoughts are their own, that their dreams, by night or by day, are the products of their mind and brain. Their fantasies, their wishful thinking, belong solely to them. If they are surprised or terrified by the events in their dreams, they attribute this to the fact that the dream

Above: *The sleep of reason brings forth monsters*, by Goya. But are the monsters the products of our own unconscious minds – or are they sometimes intruders from outside? The evidence suggests that our 'ordinary' minds may not enjoy undisputed possession of our bodies

Right: in *The three faces of Eve* (1957), Joanne Woodward played Eve, a famous multiple personality victim. One of her selves was an uninhibited girl, seen here with her psychiatrist (Lee J. Cobb)

producer, the 'master of ceremonies', is their unconscious, or that they have had too much to eat for supper or that they are worried about something. In their dreams they are like a person at the cinema who views a film he has had no hand in producing. 'What an imagination I have!' they say admiringly.

Unfortunately not all people can believe this to be the case. It appears indisputable that certain human beings have to come to terms with the fact that their control of their bodily mechanism can be challenged. Among such people are the multiple personality cases, in which a number of distinct personalities dispute the possession of one body. In some of these carefully studied cases it is possible to believe that the original personality has been shattered by one or more traumatic experiences and has given rise to 'secondary' personalities. But others, equally carefully studied by psychiatrists, demonstrate such bizarre features that the possibility of invasion by independent personalities, or parts of personalities, has to be seriously considered. If such a theory seems to the man in the street to be a woeful return to the superstitious twaddle of the Dark Ages then, its proponents would reply, he is simply ignorant of the facts.

During the last 100 years, some scores of multiple personality cases have been treated and carefully studied by authorities such as Freud, Jung, William James, Morton Prince, Walter F. Prince and others. Many have common features but it is rash to assume that the same explanation covers all of them.

Let us suppose that the everyday personality is a girl. Often she is quiet, reserved, joyless, hyperconscientious. Often she has had a very unhappy upbringing, the product of a home broken by violence. She may find herself puzzling over lost stretches of time, the events of which she cannot remember. Strange clothes appear in her wardrobe and she gradually comes to fear for her sanity. If she consults a psychiatrist she may be fortunate enough to find one who recognises her condition. He will encounter one or more secondary personalities that from time to time surface to take control of the body and obliterate the dowdy everyday personality.

Dr Walter Franklin Prince, a minister of religion and a psychologist, who investigated many cases of multiple personality and of apparent possession by spirits. One of his most celebrated cases was Doris Fischer, who had five personalities – one of whom claimed to be a guardian spirit

In a number of cases, the major secondary personality turns out to be bright and fun-loving, openly contemptuous of the quiet girl she shares the body with. The dislike and contempt of the secondary personality may find an outlet in playing tricks upon the bewildered rival, who has no knowledge of the fun-lover's existence, nor has any memories of the experiences of the other. On the other hand, the fun-lover is often fully aware of everything the dowdy one experiences when the latter is in control. So different are the two characters that the psychiatrist treating the case knows which personality is in control immediately the girl enters the room, a knowledge due not only to different tastes in fashion but also to an almost physical transformation of the patient's face. Truly, Robert Louis Stevenson displayed remarkable insight into the complexities of the human mind when he wrote *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in the late 19th century.

One body, five occupants

Five or six separate personalities in one body, quite distinct in their beliefs, ethics and mental ages, have been displayed in a number of cases. In the case of an American woman, Doris Fischer – studied by Dr Walter F. Prince of Pittsburgh – there were five personalities: Doris, Margaret, Ariel, Sick Doris and Sleeping Real Doris. Doris was the 'normal' quiet, bewildered personality, Margaret the mischievous one who got Doris into trouble. Ariel appeared when Doris was asleep and always claimed to be a spirit who had come to protect her. Sick Doris gave the impression of being a dull, nervous, timid, almost simple-minded person. Sleeping Real Doris seems to have had predominantly the role of guardian of memories: she had no marked separate personality, but could reel off memories of past events, like a living tape recorder. Dr Prince described her as 'sleeping' because this ability lay dormant most of the time.

Dr Prince and his wife took the sorely troubled girl to stay with them, almost as a daughter, and thanks to the Princes' care and psychiatric treatment, the girl's mental and physical health improved over the next few years. During that time the complex relationship among the five personalities inhabiting the body of Doris Fischer altered. At first Margaret had access to the contents of Doris's and Sick Doris's minds, while Ariel was acquainted with the minds of all

three. Sometimes quarrels would occur for control of the body. As time went on, Doris extended her control as Sick Doris and then Sleeping Real Doris gradually deteriorated and finally disappeared. It was then the turn of Margaret, the sharp, fun-loving one. Slowly she receded until she too vanished.

There is a touching and thought-provoking account of the last days of Sick Doris. As she began to disintegrate she seemed to realise that she was going to 'die'. She accompanied Dr Prince on a last walk and she left a letter for Margaret. One of the ways by which each entity communicated with the others was by writing letters when she was in control, to be read when the appropriate personality took over the body. In her letter Sick Doris instructed Margaret as to what to do with her possessions and tried to leave her sister personality some helpful advice.

To the end Ariel maintained her claim that she was a spirit sent to look after Doris. In his account Dr Prince admits that to him she was the most mature and the wisest of all the personalities and that he had to consider seriously the hypothesis that her claim was in some way the truth.

The Christine Beauchamp case displayed many similarities to the Doris Fischer case and is quite often confused with the latter, especially since it was treated by another Dr Prince – this time Dr Morton Prince, a professor at the Tufts Medical School in Boston, USA. Christine Beauchamp was a student; she was approaching a nervous breakdown when she consulted him. He tried hypnosis, finding that she was a good

subject. To his surprise a distinct, separate personality emerged – a relaxed, very much calmer version whom Prince called B-2 to distinguish her from the first Christine (B-1). But more was to follow. B-2, under hypnosis, was always rubbing her closed eyes. Prince discovered that it was a third personality, at first called B-3, who did the rubbing in an effort to get them open. B-3 insisted that she had a right to see and on a subsequent occasion she at last managed to open Christine's eyes. From then on she insisted on being known as Sally. She was a bright, mischievous person, not nearly so well-educated as Christine but exhibiting perfect health in contrast to Christine's debilitated and nervous state. She seemed to hate Christine and claimed that she never slept – that she stayed awake while the other personality was asleep. She continually tormented Christine with practical jokes. According to Dr Prince, Sally went out into the country where she collected in a box some snakes and spiders. She packed them up and addressed the package to Christine, who opened the box in due time and went into screaming hysterics – not surprisingly, since she had a horror of snakes and spiders.

Sally would also force the straitlaced Christine into embarrassing situations in which she would have to tell lies. In spite of Dr Prince's efforts, this feud continued until, quite suddenly, a fourth personality, B-4, surfaced. B-4 was a mature, responsible, firm personality who defended the luckless Christine from Sally's torments by giving Sally as good – or as bad – as she gave Christine.

Dr Prince decided that if he could merge B-1 and B-4 and suppress Sally he could obtain the true Christine. Using every hypnotic skill he possessed, he attempted to achieve this goal. It is not surprising to learn that Sally resisted to the end, claiming that she had every right to live and enjoy life. But Dr Prince succeeded in producing a more complete personality for Christine, though not quite eliminating Sally. As the years went by, Sally appeared from time to time, as if revisiting old haunts, to indulge herself by playing tricks on Christine.

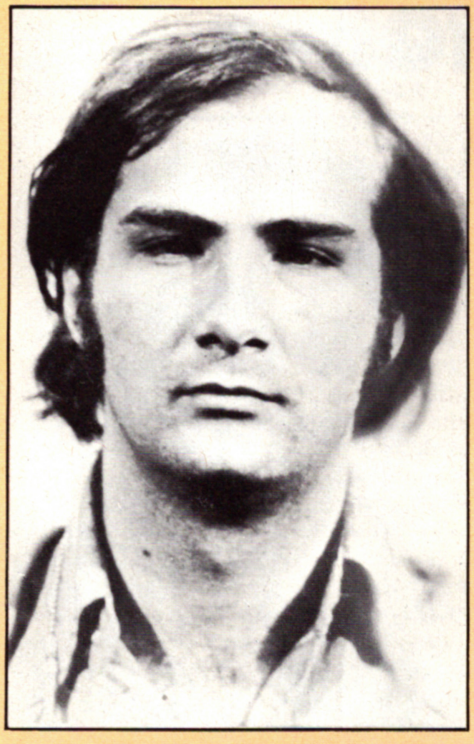
If a personality under shock can shatter into fragments, so that each fragment is made up of a fraction of all those moods, emotions, beliefs, prejudices, desires that contribute to the normal person, then, even though in the Doris Fischer case Ariel claimed to be a spirit, we can still cling to the belief that no outside and alien influences are at work. But, as we shall see, there are cases that to a number of investigators stretch this hypothesis to breaking point.

On page 2386: when the self of a sensitive wanders abroad

Left: the transformation of the decent Dr Jekyll into the bestial Mr Hyde. This film version of the classic tale by Robert Louis Stevenson (inset) was made in 1931 and starred Frederic March. Hyde is really a fragment of a personality – the repressed evil side of Jekyll's nature. Stevenson, writing in 1886, anticipated Freud in his view of a potentially destructive dark side of the mind that threatens the world of reason and light. By contrast, the 'extra' selves in multiple personality cases may be complete, rounded individuals – and sometimes even an improvement on the ordinary self

The in crowd breaks out

Perhaps the official population figures for the United States should be increased – so many of its citizens seem to be afflicted, or favoured, by extra personalities. William Milligan (below) was found guilty of raping four young women in Columbus, Ohio, in 1976. He was diagnosed as having 10 personalities – of whom the guilty one was an 18-year-old lesbian. One of the psychiatrists who hastened to interview Milligan was Dr Cornelia Wilbur; she had previously treated 'Sybil', the subject of a book and a film, who had 16 personalities.



But these cases are excelled by that of 'Charles' – the pseudonym given by a psychiatrist to what he hoped was the core personality of someone who was called Eric when he was found wandering in a daze in Daytona Beach, Florida, in February 1982. Eric immediately 'split' into two selves – 'young Eric' and 'older Eric'. Young Eric told a (fictitious) tale of being brought up by drug dealers, being raped and witnessing murders committed by his stepfather. Further personalities emerged over a period of weeks – violent Mark, arrogant Michael, blind and mute Jeffrey – until there were no fewer than 27. The youngest was a foetus. Many of the selves were in conflict and created problems for each other: Michael, for example, was athletic and went on a long jog that left Eric – and all the other occupants of his body – aching for days. 'Charles', supposedly the true personality, said afterwards: 'I've lived through hell. I'm surprised I didn't go crazy. . . .'

A spirited defence

The conviction of a leading physical medium on a charge of conspiracy caused a storm of protest in Spiritualist circles. Was she guilty or not? ROY STEMMAN chronicles the remarkable career of medium Helen Duncan

THE CURTAINS of the cabinet in the darkened seance room parted and the figure of a woman stepped out. Vincent Woodcock recognised her immediately; it was his dead wife. In all, the young electrical draughtsman from Blackpool was to see the materialised spirit of his wife on 19 occasions during seances given by the medium Helen Duncan; but this particular occasion changed his life.

Mr Woodcock had brought his wife's sister with him to this seance; when the spirit of his wife appeared from the curtained cabinet she asked them both to stand. Then, with difficulty, the materialisation removed her husband's wedding ring and placed it on her sister's wedding finger.

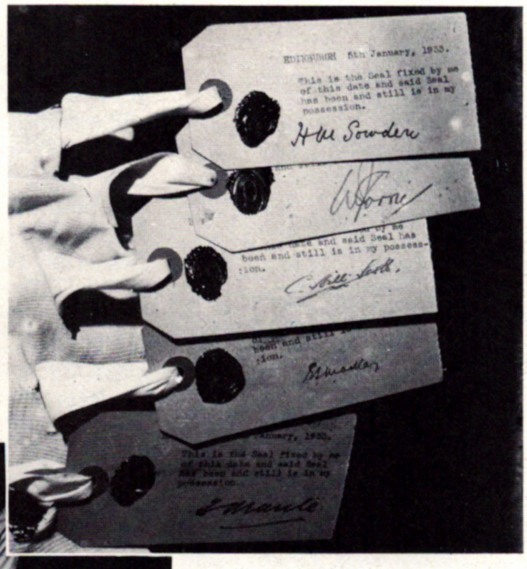
'It is my wish that this takes place for the sake of my little girl,' Mrs Woodcock told the couple. A year later they were married. At a subsequent seance the dead woman told the newly-weds how happy she was they had complied with her wishes.

This touching story of true love was recounted by Vincent Woodcock in court when he appeared as a witness for the defence in an astonishing trial at London's Old Bailey. In the dock was the medium whose psychic powers had made possible his wife's return from the spirit world: Helen Duncan.

Helen Duncan had been born in Scotland in 1898. She married at the age of 20, and her psychic talents were much in demand in the 1930s and 1940s, when she travelled around the country holding seances in private homes and Spiritualist churches. She convinced thousands of people that the dead could return in physical form. But there were also sceptics who believed Mrs Duncan's materialisations were produced by trickery. She was said to have a spirit child, Peggy, who played an important role in her seances. But in a court case in Edinburgh in May 1933 it was claimed that 'Peggy' was, in reality, a woman's undervest that a policewoman had grabbed during a seance. The medium was found guilty of fraud and fined £10.

However, the verdict did not interfere with her mediumship. In the Second World War Mrs Duncan's mediumistic powers were much in demand by the relatives of those who had died on active service, and she held many seances in Portsmouth, Hampshire, the home port of the Royal Navy. One of these seances, held on 19 January 1944, was raided by the police. A plain-clothes

At a seance held at her own home in 1933 (above) the physical medium Helen Duncan (also shown right) produced the materialised form of her spirit guide Peggy, which psychical researcher Harry Price claimed was constructed out of cheesecloth and a rubber doll. However, reputable witnesses such as the Glasgow medical officer for health testified at Mrs Duncan's trial in 1944 to seeing many genuine spirit forms at her seances



Throughout her life, controversy raged as to whether Helen Duncan's ectoplasmic materialisations were genuine or not. In a court case in Edinburgh in 1933 it was alleged that 'Peggy' was in fact a woman's under-vest manipulated by Mrs Duncan, and a vest was produced in evidence (above and left) with the seals of witnesses who had attended the seance attached. At the 1944 trial, journalist Hannen Swaffer (below), an ardent Spiritualist, affirmed that the spirit forms he had seen were true ectoplasms, and not constructed out of butter muslin

policeman who was present blew a whistle to give the signal, and his colleagues burst in; a grab was made at the ectoplasm issuing from the medium and the seance ended abruptly in commotion. Although nothing incriminating was found, Mrs Duncan, together with three others who arranged the seances, Ernest and Elizabeth Homer and Francis Brown, subsequently appeared at Portsmouth magistrates' court on a charge of conspiracy.

At the preliminary hearing the Portsmouth court was told how Lieutenant R. H. Worth of the Royal Navy had attended Mrs Duncan's seances and suspected fraud. He bought two tickets for 25 shillings (£1.25) each for the night of 19 January and took a policeman with him – War Reserve Cross. It was Cross who made a grab for the ectoplasm, which he believed to be a white sheet, but he was unable to retain it. No sheet was found by the other police officers when they entered the seance room. After this hearing bail was refused, and the medium was remanded in Holloway prison in London for four days before the case was resumed in Portsmouth.

The prosecution seemed to be uncertain on what charge the four accused should be indicted. On their first appearance at Portsmouth they were charged under the Vagrancy Act of 1824; the charge was then amended to one of conspiracy. But when the case was eventually transferred to the central criminal court at the Old Bailey – where it was dubbed the 'trial of the century' by some newspapers – the Witchcraft Act of 1735 was cited.

Under this ancient act the defendants were accused of pretending 'to exercise or use a kind of conjuration that through the agency of Helen Duncan spirits of deceased persons should appear to be present. . . .' Other charges were brought under the Larceny Act accusing them of taking money 'by falsely pretending they were in a position to bring about the appearances of the spirits of deceased persons and that they then, bona fide, intended so to do without trickery.'

Spiritualists were dismayed by the use of the Witchcraft Act to bring a prosecution against such a famous medium. Under this Act it appeared she could be proved guilty whether or not she was genuine.

The prosecution clearly believed Helen Duncan was a fraud, and were not deterred by the absence of any props. During the trial prosecuting Counsel John Maude produced a long piece of butter muslin and referred repeatedly to the theory put forward by psychical researcher Harry Price that Helen Duncan achieved her results by swallowing muslin and then regurgitating it. Defence witnesses offered to produce a doctor's statement and X-rays to show that Mrs Duncan had a normal stomach, incapable of hiding props. These were not admitted in evidence.

A one-eyed spirit

The trial took place a few months before D-Day and lasted seven days. Numerous witnesses testified to events in seances that must have shaken many sceptics. Several people said they had seen the medium – who weighed 22 stone (140 kilograms) – and her tall, thin spirit guide Albert Stewart simultaneously. Kathleen McNeill, wife of a Glasgow forgemaster, told how she had attended a seance at which her sister appeared. Her sister had died a few hours earlier, after an operation, and news of her death could not have been known. Yet Mrs Duncan's guide Albert announced that she had just passed over. At another seance some years later Mrs McNeill's father strode out of the cabinet and came up to within 6 feet (1.8 metres) of her. She testified that he had only one eye, as he did when alive.

Some of the most impressive evidence was given on the sixth day of the trial. Alfred Dodd, an academic who had written books on Shakespeare's sonnets, told the court that he had attended Mrs Duncan's seances between 1932 and 1940. At one of these his grandfather appeared; he was a tall, corpulent man with a bronzed face, and he was wearing a smoking cap just like the one he

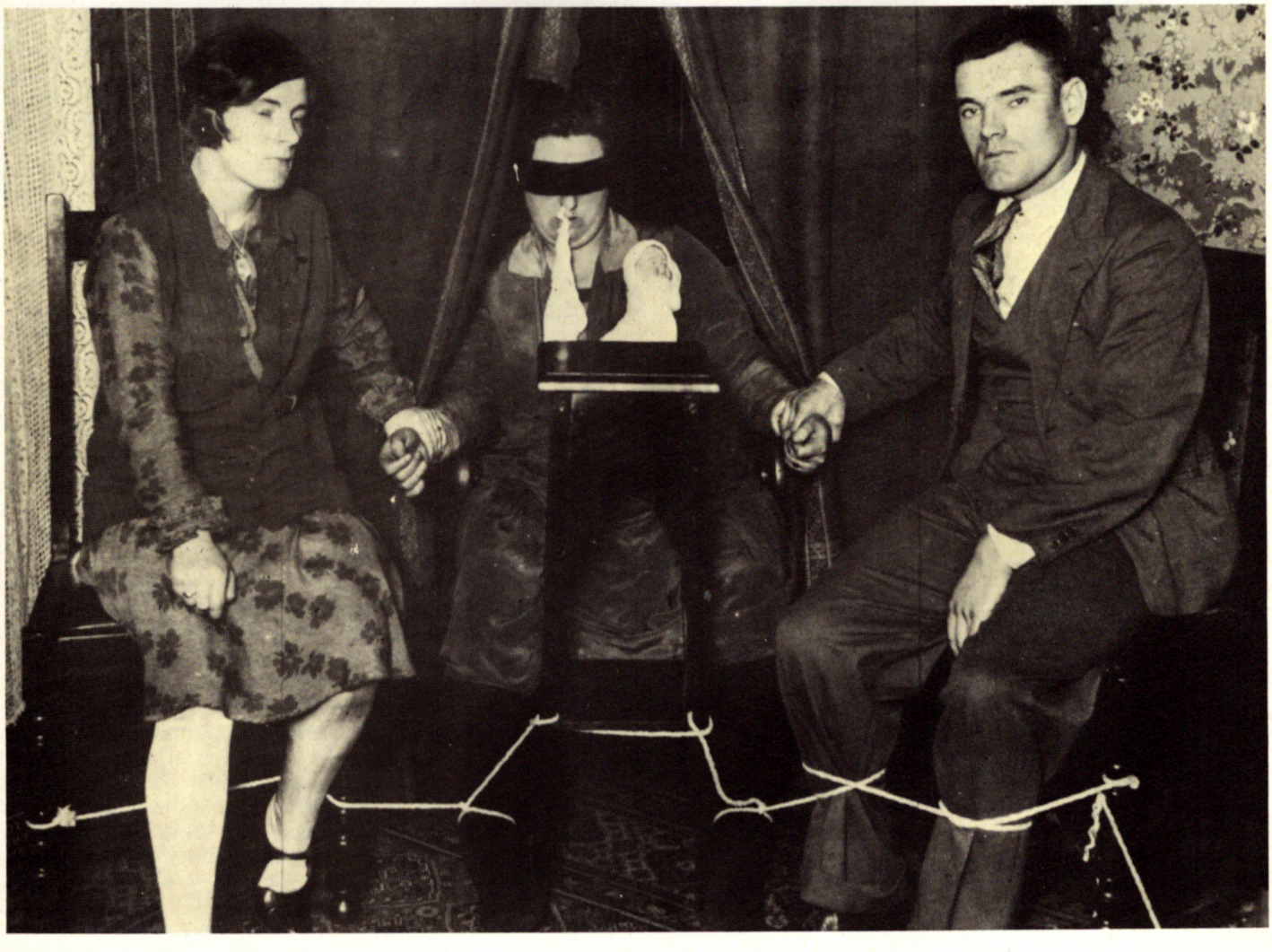
always used to wear; his hair was in the same donkey-fringe style. After talking to his grandson he turned to Dodd's friend, Tom, who had come with him to the seance. 'Look into my face, look into my eyes and you will know me again,' he said. 'Ask Alfred to show you my portrait. It's the same man.' The spirit then walked back to the curtained cabinet, clapped his hand on his leg three times and said, 'It's solid, Alfred, it's solid.'

Two journalists, Hannen Swaffer and J. W. Herries, were also called by the defence. The flamboyant Swaffer told the court that anyone who described ectoplasm as butter muslin 'would be a child': under a red light in a seance room it would look yellow or pink, whereas the spirit forms had a living whiteness. Herries, chief reporter of the *Scotsman* newspaper and a justice of the peace, affirmed that he had seen Sir Arthur Conan Doyle materialise at one of Helen Duncan's seances. He had noted Doyle's rounded features and moustache, and had identified his voice. He maintained that the idea that the spirit form of Peggy could have been an undervest was ridiculous, and the cheesecloth regurgitation theory was absurd.

Apart from the testimony of witnesses, the defence offered the jury a demonstration of Helen Duncan's mediumship. At the start of the trial the judge declined this offer, and suggested instead that Mrs Duncan should be called as a witness. The defence replied that Mrs Duncan could not testify, as she was in a trance during seances and unable to discuss what transpired. On the final day the judge changed his mind about the demonstration, and asked the jury if they would like to have one. After some discussion, they turned the offer down.

The jury took 25 minutes to consider their verdict: they found the four defendants guilty of conspiracy to contravene the Witchcraft Act. They were discharged from giving verdicts on the other counts. The chief constable of Portsmouth then described Mrs Duncan's background. She was married to a cabinet maker, had a family of six ranging in age from 18 to 26, and had been visiting Portsmouth for the past five years. In 1941 she had been reported for violating the security laws when she announced the loss of one of His Majesty's ships before the fact was made public. 'She is an unmitigated humbug and pest,' he said.

The judge deferred pronouncing sentence until after the weekend, and Mrs Duncan was led downstairs weeping, declaring in her broad Scots accent, 'I never heard so mony lies in a' my life.'



Even with her hands held by witnesses and her feet bound, Helen Duncan succeeded in materialising her child spirit guide Peggy, apparently from ectoplasm issuing from her nose. She also had a male spirit guide, Albert Stewart, who was tall and thin, and several people testified to having seen Albert and the solid, generously proportioned form of Mrs Duncan simultaneously

When he came to pass sentence, the judge said that the verdict had not been concerned with whether 'genuine manifestations of the kind are possible . . . this court has nothing whatever to do with such abstract questions.' The jury had found this to be a case of plain dishonesty, and he sentenced Mrs Duncan to nine months' imprisonment. The medium cried out, 'I didn't do anything,' and was led away moaning and crying. Of the other defendants, Mrs Brown was given four months (she had two previous convictions for larceny and shop-lifting) and the Homers were fined £5 and bound over to be of good behaviour for two years. An appeal for the case to go to the House of Lords was rejected.

Helen Duncan served her sentence in Holloway prison; the Spiritualist movement, shocked by the verdict, called for a change in the law to prevent such prosecutions. Many of Mrs Duncan's supporters believed she had been prosecuted to stop the leakage of classified war-time information. For instance a sailor had materialised in a seance in Portsmouth in 1943 and said that he had gone down with HMS *Barham*, whose loss was not officially announced until three months later.

When she was released from prison on 22 September 1944, Helen Duncan announced that she would not give any more seances; but it was not long before she changed her mind. In fact she was soon giving so many that Spiritualists became concerned that she was over-sitting. The quality of the manifestations in her seances was said to have deteriorated, and the Spiritualists' National Union even withdrew her diploma.

Song and dance act

Yet other reports suggested that her powers were far from weakened. In the home of medium Susie Hughes, in Liverpool, Susie's spirit guide, Bluebell, was said to have appeared together with Peggy, Mrs Duncan's child guide. The two sang and danced together in front of many witnesses. At another seance Susie Hughes's father materialised. He greeted his wife and insisted that they walk into the brightest part of the room so that she could be sure it was him. He then led her back to her chair and, with outstretched hands, took her in his arms and lifted her high above his head.

Alan Crossley, who wrote *The story of Helen Duncan* (1975), attended a seance with Mrs Duncan in 1954 at which he saw both the medium and Albert standing outside the cabinet curtain. He also saw the spirit of a man who had died just a few days earlier. The man's wife and son were present and were overcome with emotion when they recognised him.

In 1951 the Witchcraft Act of 1735 was repealed and replaced with the Fraudulent Mediums Act. Mrs Duncan's trial had certainly prompted this change in the law, but Spiritualists' hopes that mediums would no longer be subjected to police harassment were short lived. In November 1956 police raided a seance taking place in Nottingham. They grabbed the medium, searched her and took flashlight pictures of her; they shouted that they were looking for beards, masks and a shroud. They found nothing.

Wrapped in black from neck to toe, medium Helen Duncan materialises a spirit hand that bears a remarkable resemblance to a rubber glove (right). Nevertheless her authenticity is still debatable; it seems that more than a quarter of a century after her death in 1956 Mrs Duncan spoke with her daughter Gina for over an hour through the direct-voice mediumship of Rita Goold (below)

The medium was Helen Duncan. The interruption of a physical seance is always regarded as extremely dangerous by Spiritualists, because the ectoplasm is said to return to the body too rapidly. In this case it caused Mrs Duncan great discomfort. A doctor was called and she was treated for shock; two burns were later discovered on her stomach. She was so ill that she returned to her family in Scotland and was admitted to hospital. Five weeks after the police raid she left the hospital; two days later she was dead.

The story of Helen Duncan is one of the most tragic and remarkable in the history of Spiritualism. She was either a brilliant fraud, able to make people see what they wanted to see by manipulating articles in the dark, or she was one of the most outstanding physical mediums of all time. Her story does not end with her death. Her daughter Gina revealed in *Psychic News* on 4 September 1982 that her mother had spoken to her for more than an hour through the direct-voice mediumship of Rita Goold of Leicester.

Most of the conversation was of a highly personal nature, and at the end of the seance Gina declared, 'Yes, it is my mother. There is no doubt about it.' It seems that 26 years after her death, Helen Duncan was still working to prove that life does continue beyond the grave.

Waking up to psi

When a group of people make a serious effort to compare and analyse their dreams, they are likely to find apparent telepathic links. JOE FRIEDMAN tells the story of a 'dialogue between dreamers' that lasted two years

MOST OF THE ACCOUNTS of spontaneous ESP in the literature of parapsychology seem to be of isolated episodes. There are few examples of a sustained telepathic link between two people. One such is the telepathic link between the American novelist Upton Sinclair and his wife, a link that was tested in a series of ESP drawing experiments described in Sinclair's book *Mental radio*. This book, published in 1930, so impressed Albert Einstein that he wrote an introduction to it.

In the late 1970s I myself was involved in a sustained and well-documented series of dreams telepathically linked to those of a close friend and former student. Most of these dreams took place between May and December 1979. There were more than 20 in all, equally distributed between the two partners.

The American writer Upton Sinclair and his wife Craig. She believed from an early age that she had powers of extra-sensory perception. His interest in the paranormal dated from a boyhood conversation with a Unitarian minister who claimed to have talked with ghosts. Upton Sinclair found that he could apparently send pictures telepathically to his wife as she lay in a darkened room, meditating

Dave Ashworth became a student in one of my parapsychology courses, held in London, in April 1978. Aged 23, he had been interested in the occult and psychical research for some time. He was also deeply aware of his dream life, often remembering and recording several dreams a night. After a class I held on telepathic and precognitive dreams, Dave came up to me and said that, though he had been writing down his dreams for some time, he had never had one that he considered to be precognitive. I told him confidently that he would have such a dream the following week. In saying this, I was partly trying to bring about the desired result – but I also felt a genuine conviction that Dave would have a precognitive dream.

But the following week he told me of the failure of his attempt. He had remembered and recorded 13 dreams during the week, but none of them had proved precognitive. I asked him to tell me just one. After looking through his dream diary, he told me a dream in which

> the brat next door comes into my room. I am very hospitable and feed him, but he acts boorishly as if he owns the place. He opens the wardrobe and to my amazement there is another door in the back of the wardrobe, which leads into the attic next door. . . .

I told Dave he had just had his first 'precognitive' dream. I had been intending to lead my class in a guided fantasy that evening: they would be urged to have a dream in which they opened their wardrobe door to find that there was another door in the back, a door that opened magically for them. Strictly speaking, this was not a precognitive dream, as I knew that I was going to be doing this exercise; however, the dream can be considered telepathic.

This dream inaugurated a telepathic dream series that lasted over two years. This dream correspondence was marked by an important factor – that of selection. In this case, Dave chose the psychic dream from a total of 13 that he had recorded during the week. He could hardly have picked out the 'right' dream by pure chance – he must have had some awareness that this dream was the psychic one for which he was looking. Later in the series, this awareness became more explicit, so that each of us became better able to pick out his own psychic dreams.

In March 1979 Dave joined a dream group that I was leading. We met fairly regularly, often once a week, for a period of a little more than a year. It was during this period that most of the psychic dreams occurred.

We started the practice of telling each other any dreams in which the other partner in the relationship figured. A high percentage contained correspondences, highly unlikely to have occurred by chance, with the dreams or waking life of the other person.

Often, Dave and I would dream of similar topics, themes or metaphors on the same night. In one such spontaneous coincidence I dreamed of visiting a friend who lives in Colliers Wood in south London. In part of Dave's dream of that night, most of which involved eating at my flat, he dreamed of

> a picnic in a forest. All around are

people in orange clothes . . . some single, some in groups. They are either walkers or miners. . . . There are stones and stone circles . . . I stand in one circle and am aware that this is a place of power. I touch my forehead to a tree and then wonder if I am emitting psychic power.

Could the people in the forest who might have been miners be a reference to Colliers Wood? This dream is important for other reasons. In it, Dave seems to have an awareness that it is connected with me – he dreams of eating a meal at my flat – and also that the dream is psychic – he dreams that he is emitting psychic power.

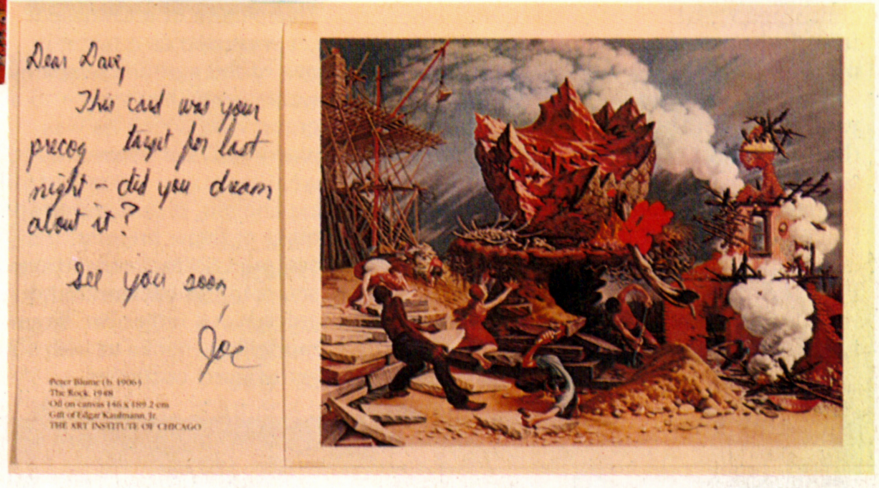
Many of the psychoanalysts who have studied psychic dreams have found this sort of 'tracer' – an indication in the dream itself that it will prove psychic. I have found that most people who have regular telepathic dreams have some sort of tracer in them. For example, psychic dreams often have a peculiar quality of vividness. On other occasions, these dreams might have a distinctive 'feel' to them. In Dave's psychic dreams a grey cat often appears. In other people's dreams the tracer is in the fact that the dream is set in a certain dream locality, a place of power.

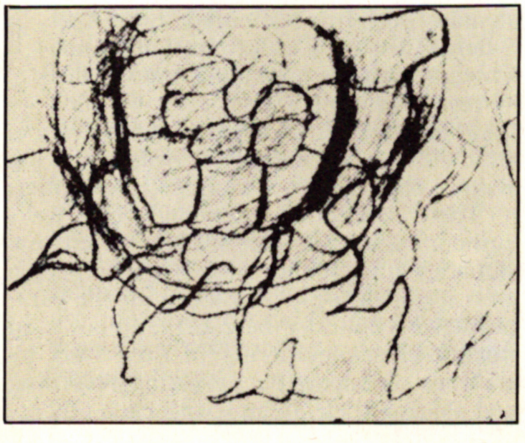
Many of the dreams in our telepathic series contained such tracer elements. Their presence indicated that both of us were becoming more aware of the dream dialogue that was gradually developing between the two of us.

Another sort of psychic dream involves a reference to an event occurring in the waking life of the other person in the relationship. In one such dream I had gone to a park with a friend of Dave's and mine called Laura. According to my dream diary, while I was preoccupied with listening to some music that was being played in the park

> a black youth started to remove my bike. I rushed over to him and started pushing him around, really enjoying myself, saying 'What are you doing with my bike?' While I was doing this, the boy's father came and got on my bike and started to ride it off. I realized that I had allowed myself to get carried away. . . .

Shortly before I dreamed this, in the evening, Dave had left his bike outside a friend's house during a visit. While he was inside, his rear light was stolen, for the second time from this location. On the way home, Dave fell to daydreaming of leaving his bike outside this house and hiding, waiting for the thief to come. He then caught the thief and gave him a good beating. His daydream





An apparent telepathic dream link was forged between the author and his student Dave Ashworth (top). Once Friedman (on the right in this picture) sent a picture postcard (above) to Ashworth from the United States, hoping it would appear in Ashworth's dreams. Before receiving the card Ashworth did indeed dream of meeting Friedman and discussing SF films – an apparent reference to the picture's fantasy theme

Left: a picture that Upton Sinclair 'sent' (top) and his wife 'received' (bottom). Mrs Sinclair concentrated on the target picture, sealed in an envelope, and then made her sketch, closely resembling her husband's. Yet she did not recognise it as a bird's nest – she wrote on it: 'Inside of a rock well with vines climbing on outside'

Dear diary...

If you wish to look for ESP in your dreams, it will be necessary to remember as many as you can, in as much detail as possible. Keep a notebook and pencil at your bedside and write down your dreams *immediately* you wake up. Often there may be only one fading image: if you keep going over it in your mind other parts of the dream will probably be recalled. If you can remember nothing of the dream, go over the thoughts you had at the moment of waking – these are likely to lead back to the dream. It is helpful to carry a notebook during the day to jot down the remembered dream scenes that sometimes come to mind without warning.

Write down the dreams in as much detail as you reasonably can. Selection will be necessary, however, so pay attention to the unusual detail that would provide strong evidence of the paranormal if it were also to occur in someone else's dream (or, indeed, in waking life).

Your partners in the experiment will, of course, need to keep equally detailed dream diaries. Resemblances between your dreams and theirs will undoubtedly occur: your problem will be to decide in an objective way which ones could not be due to coincidence.

Further reading

Upton Sinclair, *Mental radio*, Macmillan (New York) 1971

Charles T. Tart (ed.), *Altered states of consciousness*, John Wiley (New York) 1969

M. Ullman, S. Krippner and A. Vaughan, *Dream telepathy*, Turnstone 1973

continued with the boy's father coming to his friend's house and asking for the person who owned a bicycle. . . .

I did several sorts of informal experiment with Dave. In the first, I bought a postcard that I thought would be a good target and sent it to Dave while I was on holiday in the United States. I wrote on the back: 'Dear Dave, This card was your precog. target for last night – did you dream about it?' In fact, Dave's dream on the night before he received the card did have a resemblance to the target. His dream:

> At Joe's seeing him for the first time after the break. He tells me of some sci-fi film – did I see it? I didn't, but it seems Roy [Joe's flatmate] did. They talk about it. Joe then mentions a series of sci-fi fantasy films, but I have seen none of them.

This science fiction or fantasy theme did seem to correspond with the picture on the postcard, which was a fantasy scene. Interestingly, I did not know the date of the postcard's arrival in England, and Dave on his part did not even know of the experiment, since I had conceived of it on the spur of the moment. In the dream there is also a clear tracer element – Dave dreams of seeing me for the first time since the holidays – and the dream seemingly was a psychic 'meeting'. In the dream I kept insisting that Dave must have seen one of the films I was telling him about, but he denied it – just as the dream itself was alluding to the postcard scene but not actually succeeding in showing it to the dreamer.

On another occasion Dave picked up a photograph I was 'transmitting' to another group with which I was involved. On the night of this transmission, of which he had no knowledge, Dave dreamed:

> In a street I come unexpectedly upon Jeff [a friend] – he looks absolutely amazing, dressed in a yellow safari suit . . . with a butterfly net in one hand, stalking butterflies. . . . There are many brightly coloured butterflies, large furry ones, yellow ones and somewhere amidst them all is one which is very special.

The photograph showed a dance troupe, which included a number of people wearing wings – they did indeed look like butterflies.

These are a few personal, but well-authenticated, examples of dream telepathy. But they suggest that two, or more, people who are open to the possibility of the paranormal can radically increase the amount and quality of ESP occurring in their lives by making a practice of remembering, recording and sharing their dreams with each other.

This picture of a Chinese film set was used as a target in one of the author's telepathy experiments. He 'sent' it to a group with which he was working. Dave Ashworth, who knew nothing of the experiment, dreamed that night of large, brightly coloured butterflies, and the actors in the background do indeed look rather like huge butterflies, thanks to their extravagant costumes

Post script

Your letters to THE UNEXPLAINED

Dear Sir,
It is to my personal despair as a serious student of early British and Anglo-Saxon history that the popular imagination makes no distinction between the Romano-Celtic inhabitants of Great Britain and the subsequent English invaders/settlers.

I have always found your magazine accurate and authoritative and was therefore shocked at your article entitled 'A step through time' in issue 100, which serves to perpetrate the preposterous claim that the Celtic queen, Boudicca, was a heroine of the 'English'. When one considers that the conglomeration of Germanic tribes who later constituted the 'English' were at the time living hundreds of miles away on or around the Baltic and Frisian coasts, one realises the patent absurdity of such a claim.

One might indeed make similarly absurd claims concerning Chief Sitting Bull and the Lutheran settlers of North Dakota and Minnesota.
Yours faithfully,
Talfryn Davies London

Dear Sir,
After reading J. Lester's letter in Postscript of issue 35 of *The Unexplained* about his wife's ability to smell death, I was reminded of an incident that happened when I was 15 years old.

It was in the summer of 1968. I returned from school one afternoon and found my mother pale and shocked, sitting in my bedroom. She told me she could smell death there, but that it was a male death – she was absolutely sure of that.

I asked her to explain what she meant: what sort of smell was it? She described it as best she could, as a sickly, sweetish smell that was not particularly unpleasant, but very strong.

At that time my 10-year-old brother was out playing football, but after her experience my mother asked Dad to go and pick him up immediately. Actually I was rather surprised that Dad wasn't more sceptical, being a long-serving policeman who didn't suffer fools gladly. Anyway, my brother Paul was duly brought home – feeling somewhat indignant – and we were both told by Mum that we were to stay indoors indefinitely. We weren't even allowed to go to school; strangely, Dad didn't even argue over that.

Paul and I were kept away from school, and indoors, for a week. Mum refused to go into my bedroom, still maintaining that she could smell death there. Then suddenly one day she announced that the smell had gone but that we were to remain indoors for another couple of days, just to be on the safe side.

Then the evening before I was due to return to school we had a late-night visitor, a young lad whom I knew to be a friend of our next door neighbour's son, Ron. This boy told me that Ron had been killed in a motor scooter accident the night before; he had been to see Ron's parents that evening, and they had asked him to break the tragic news to the neighbours, which of course included us.

My mother's reaction to the news was first unbounded relief – and then distress. She believed that the 'male death smell' in my bedroom was probably due to the fact that Ron's bedroom was next to mine, through the party wall.

I noticed that even Dad was rather relieved and I asked him why he had gone along with Mum over such a seemingly irrational act. Then he told me about what had happened before the death of my baby brother 11 years earlier.

Again my mother told Dad she could smell death in the baby-to-be's bedroom – again it was the smell of a 'male death'. At first my mother took it to be an omen of my grandfather's death, for he was rather ill and had recently slept in that room while staying with them a month or so beforehand.

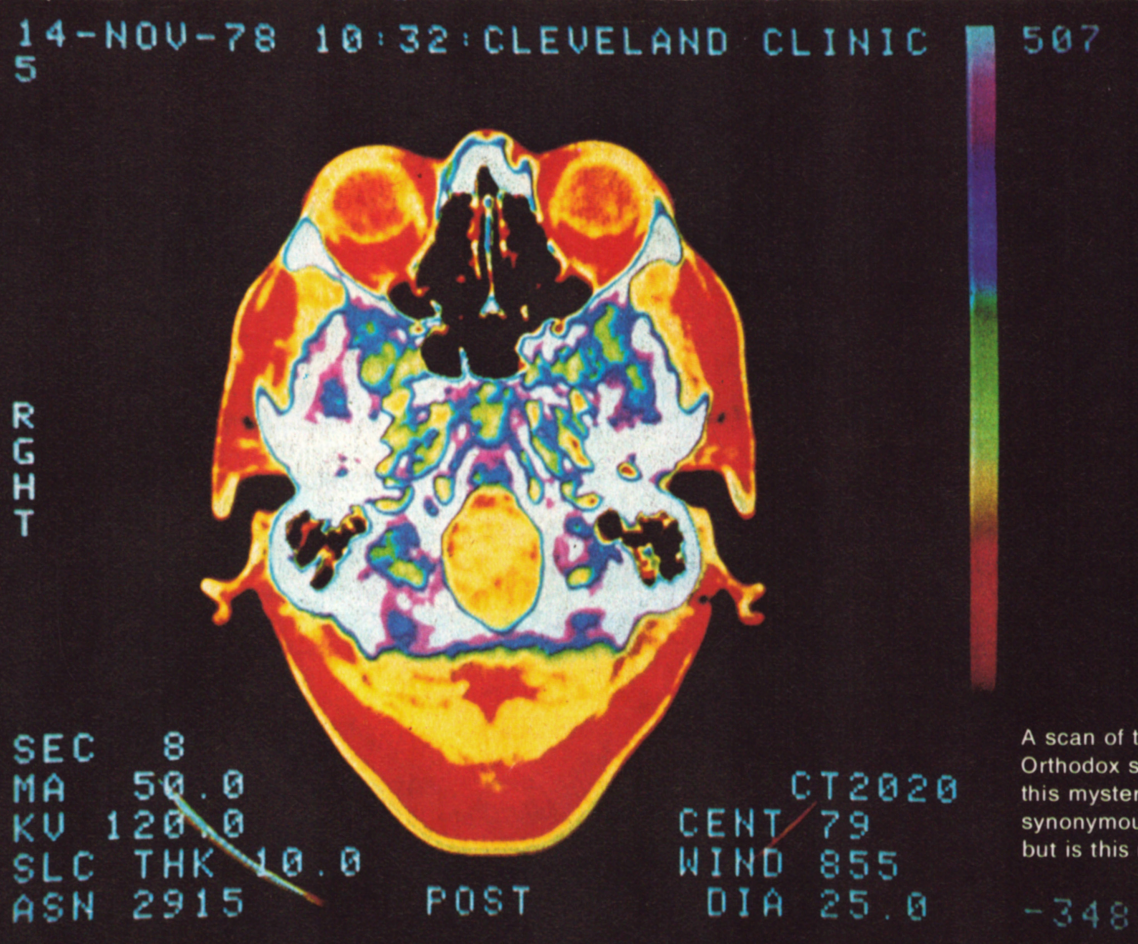
She moved the cot into her bedroom as soon as the baby was born so she could keep an eye on him during the night. But my little brother died five days before Christmas. The coroner's verdict was that it was a 'cot death'. The smell of death had disappeared a day before the baby died: so that was why Mum had kept us indoors for a further two days after the smell had gone. (My grandfather, incidentally, lived for another 20 years.)

My mother hasn't experienced the smell since Ron's death, but she has rattled me a few times with her 'sensitive's' nature.
Yours faithfully,
Jean Tinsley (Mrs) Lydiate, Merseyside

Dear Sir,
My sister was staying in France at a place called Cournon, near Clermond-Ferrand, for a few months in 1982 when she wrote to us telling of an extraordinary hailstorm they had had on Bastille day – 14 July. Apparently the hailstones were a bit larger than golf balls, as you can see from the photograph taken at the time [below].

However, these hailstones did not fall slowly, as they had near Clermond-Ferrand in 1873 as mentioned in the article entitled 'For it is written . . .' in issue 94 of *The Unexplained*. My sister wished they had, for they broke nearly 80 tiles in the roof, knocked fruit off trees and damaged several vehicles in the neighbourhood.
Yours faithfully,
Wyn Williams Mon, Gwynedd

Send *your* letters to THE UNEXPLAINED, Orbis House, 20–22 Bedfordbury, London WC2N 4BT



A scan of the brain. Orthodox scientists believe this mysterious organ to be synonymous with the mind – but is this really so?

Wonders to behold

A glimpse of some of the exciting new series starting soon in *The Unexplained*

Amityville analysed
After the films of the book comes the truth about the 'Amityville horror', a tale truly 'full of sound and fury' that sent the Lutz family screaming all the way to the bank.
See issue 120

The touch of death
A light touch – and days or months later you inexplicably drop dead. An accident? Or were you a victim of the 'delayed death touch' of the martial arts? **See issue 121**

The Enfield enigma
For 18 months a family in north London were victims of a poltergeist attack – or were the investigators victims of a hoax? The case is by no means closed; we start sifting the evidence in **issue 121**

Truth is stranger . . .
A novelist creates a tramp with an improbable name – and she later discovers that her 'fictional' character has been found dead. Which comes first, the fact or the fiction? **See issue 123**

Out of one's skull?
Are the mind and the brain – and therefore the personality – the same? Or are they, as controversial scientist Dr Rupert Sheldrake suggests, analogous to radio waves and a radio? And is the mind independent of time and space? **See issue 124**

Was crucified, dead and buried . . .
It seems sacrilegious to the average Westerner that Christ did not die on the cross and may have lived many more years outside the Holy Land. Yet disturbing evidence has come to light that Christ was really buried in Kashmir. **See issue 124**

The origins of genius
Some very young children have exhibited signs of extraordinary genius, while creative artists too have been at a loss to explain the source of their greatest inspiration.
See issue 125

Voodoo's dark practices
Biting the heads off live chickens, and whipping up an evil atmosphere in order to kill one's enemies – this is the popular image of voodoo witch doctors. For the truth
see issue 125